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UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 001251

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/E, AF/PD AND AF/RA
CENTCOM FOR J-5
DOD FOR ISA/AF

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [EAID](#) [KHIV](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PARTICIPATES IN USLO LAUNCH OF HIV/AIDS PROJECT

11. (U) In a ceremony at the garrison of the Djiboutian Armed Forces on December 22, Ambassador formally handed over to Commanding General of the Djibouti Armed Forces, Fathi Ahmed Hussein, HIV/AIDS laboratory equipment and furnishings necessary to conduct sero-prevalence surveys in Djibouti. Also attending were General Zakaria Cheikh Ibrahim, Chief of Staff of the Djiboutian Armed Forces, a host of other Djiboutian military officers, U.S. Liaison Office (USLO) Chief, and Embassy Djibouti DCM.

12. (U) In her speech delivered at the launch, Ambassador said AIDS is a tragedy for millions of men, women and children throughout the world and is a grave public health threat to the stability of nations. She expressed the embassy's pride in being able to stand with the Djiboutians in general, and with the Armed Forces of Djibouti in particular, against this threat. She noted that AIDS had afflicted at least 10,000 persons in Djibouti and that more are at peril. She noted the importance of the laboratory for those of the military community who are more broadly exposed in the society to this plague. Ambassador also noted the role played by the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in taking up locally the fight against the proliferation of AIDS in the region.

13. (U) General Fathi, in his speech, thanked the Ambassador for her presence and noted the support of the U.S. in general in the campaign against AIDS. He affirmed Djibouti's political will, as reiterated by the President of Djibouti, to fight the AIDS pandemic. He praised the Health Division within the military for its efficient use of the resources provided by other nations and said the material Djibouti received from the U.S. this day will no doubt permit the country to achieve its objectives in the domain of HIV/AIDS prevention and care and to maximize its internal health capacity.

14. (U) The Djiboutian Armed Forces began benefiting at the beginning for FY-2004 from Department of Defense HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP) funds, under FMF, to fight against HIV/AIDS. Initial funding purchased necessary equipment and materials to start the program. This was followed by sensitization campaigns among military personnel and climaxed in a grant of USD 232,000 for purchase of the laboratory equipment and furnishings handed over in the ceremony on December 22. As of December 22, only a portion of the equipment requested is in country. The remainder is expected to arrive in Djibouti by the second week of January 2006. However training on use of all equipment has already taken place under USLO auspices.

RAGSDALE